

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 081038

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KS, LA

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE ROK EFFORT OPEN VIENTIANE EMBASSY

1. KOREAN EMBOFF CALLED AT DEPARTMENT APRIL 19 TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE EARLY APPROACH TO NEW PGNU RE OPENING OF ROK EMBASSY. AS EMBOFF POINTED OUT, SEOUL ALREADY MAINTAINS COMMERCIAL MISSION IN VIENTIANE, WHICH WOULD BE UPGRADED AND PROBABLY LEFT UNDER CHARGE WITH AMBASSADOR RESIDENT IN BANGKOK.

2. IN REPLY, DEPTOFF STATED ROK SEEMED HAVE THREE CHOICES:

1) SIT THINGS OUT WITH COMMERCIAL MISSION UNTIL ROK SEES WHICH WAY WIND BLOWS, 2) FORCE THE ISSUE WITH THE RISK OF A NEGATIVE REPLY OF 3) FORCE ISSUE WITH GOOD CHANCE THAT ANY FAVORABLE REPLY WOULD INCLUDE APPROVAL OF A DPRK EMBASSY ALSO.

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3. ALL IN ALL, IT APPEARS THAT SEOUL WILL PROBABLY MAKE
EARLY APPROACH RE ESTABLISHMENT EMBASSY ON THE GROUNDS
THAT IT NO LONGER OBJECTS TO DPRK DIPLOMATIC MISSION
AND ESPECIALLY SINCE IT FEELS IT WILL OBTAIN SOME SORT OF
NEBULOUS ADVANTAGE OF SENIORITY OVER PYONGYANG BY HAVING
MADE APPROACH FIRST.

4. AT END OF CONVERSATION ROK EMBOFF ASKED THAT USG LEND

ITS SUPPORT AS NEEDED. HE WAS ASSURED THAT AMEMBASSY
VIENTIANE WOULD BE PREPARED ASSIST AS APPROPRIATE BUT
THAT ROK SHOULD MAKE OWN APPROACH TO RLG IN ORDER AVOID
ANY POSSIBLE WEAKENING OF ITS POSITION THROUGH ACCUSATION
THAT IT IS US STOOGES. RUSH

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